IN THE CLAIMS:

1-20. (Cancelled)

21. (Currently Amended) A method of differentiating between the presence of a human occupant and a child restraint seat in a motor vehicle, said method comprising the steps of;

sensing tension exerted on a seat belt with a sensor fixed along said seat belt;

communicating the magnitude of the sensed tension to a controller;

comparing the magnitude of tension to a predetermined tension; and

determining that a child restraint seat is present if the sensed tension is greater than the predetermined tension.

22. (Original) The method of claim 21, wherein the motor vehicle includes an air bag system, and further includes the step of disabling deployment of the air bag system upon determining the presence of the child restraint seat.

23. (Original) The method of claim 22, wherein the predetermined tension is further defined as the tension that is normally not tolerable for human occupants and that which is normally exerted to secure a child restraint seat in place.

24. (Original) The method of claim 23, wherein the sensing step further includes the step of providing a sensor disposed on the seat belt having a strain gauge to sense tension forces exerted on the seat belt.

25. (New) The method of claim 24, wherein said sensor assembly comprises a carrier having a tensile section and said strain gauge disposed within said tensile section.

26. (New) The assembly of claim 25, wherein said carrier includes two belt loops disposed on opposite ends of said tensile section, and said sensor is attached in line with one on of said belt sections at said belt loops.

27. (New) The assembly of claim 24, wherein said sensor assembly comprises at least three prongs extending from a common beam, said prongs attached to said seat belt without modification of the seat belt.

28. (New) The assembly of claim 27, wherein a strain gauge is disposed on one of said prongs to generate a force signal representative of a force exerted on the seat belt